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India

Fourteen Years in the Field.

Your attention will be invited to-day, chiefly to the Foreign side of our work and progress as a Mission; although the advance here at home is such as to call for scarcely less gratitude and encouragement. Just a glance at our beginning: As a Society we are older, perhaps, than we realize, and yet, one might add, deplorably youthful. Just

A SCORE OF YEARS AGO

half a dozen of our fathers met to consult over and decide upon a plan for doing a Foreign Mission work. Years before that even, the query as to whether we ought not to organize for this great work had been stirring in the minds of some of our leaders, but was kept in abeyance till the spirit of Foreign Missions became personified for us in our brother, A. V. Timpany, and then the matter *had* to be met; met it was in a spirit of consecration, prayer and faith, and it well becomes us, now that high hopes and large expectations have been by God's blessing realized, to remember and be thankful for the stand then taken. When

OUR PIONEER MISSIONARY

and a plan for co-operation with the A. B. M. Union were ready, the field was soon pointed out. The "lone star" was beginning to shine more brightly, the long parched fields to show signs of the coming harvest, and a piteous appeal for reapers had reached the Rooms in Boston. This was placed in the hands of brother Timpany. With joyous hopeful-

ness, prophetic of the coming blessing, he hastened off to the relief of the little force among the Telugus at Nellore. Two years later, we followed, and for six happy, fruitful years, it was the privilege of your missionaries to be co-workers with those men of God so especially honored by Him on the foreign field—Drs. Jewett and Clough.

Previous to our departure from Canada, however, brethren had said :

“KEEP A LOOK-OUT

for a field that may meet our capacity to support. Canadian Baptists will never do their best till they have a mission of their own.” The outlooking eye was rewarded on this wise : One sultry morning in 1871, when the missionary in Ramapatam went out in the early dawn, he found a travelling-cart, attended by a respectable native of fine appearance and polite address, as is so characteristic of Hindu gentlemen generally. This was Thomas Gabriel—a Telugu Christian ; more, a man of education and consecration, devoted to evangelistic work for his fellow-countrymen.

Briefly, his story was this : A man of Cocanada, he had a good post in the telegraph department ; while on duty in a distant part, he had been brought to know Jesus, among the Lutherans. Having come in contact later, with a native Baptist brother, who was conspicuously clear and ardent in his religious convictions, he had been taught “the way of the Lord more perfectly,” and was immersed.

Returning to Cocanada, still in government employ, he preached as time allowed, to the people of that city. Conversions followed and some were baptized. Gabriel in the meantime had been ordained in Madras. His position was good in the telegraph department. His salary was Rs. 75 (\$30) a month, with a possible rise to Rs. 125, and a pension of half his last salary. This, for a native,

was wealth. But as he wrought for *souls* his zeal grew, he wanted all his time for this great work, so resigned his place, pay, pension and all; associated with himself one of the native Christian men who had a small business, and sought thus to provide for his family and for the needs of his mission. But

FAILURE SOON CAME UPON THEM.

He found himself in financial difficulty, and in his distress began to look about for relief from the responsibilities connected with his mission work. There was now a church of fifty members, and a few untrained helpers; the work had gone beyond his capacity to care for, or follow up. When we first saw him that day in Ramapatam, he was on his way to Madras, to offer his mission to the Strict Baptists of England, through their agent there, and had turned in to rest with us by the way.

Though deeply interested in his work, none sought to turn him from his plan. But as we soon learned, the English Baptists had neither help nor hope to offer. Their hands were full. Aid of the American Baptists was next sought, but in vain. It was a time when they could not even *consider* a new charge.

The Maritime Provinces were already committed to Siam. As a last resort, Gabriel sent a stirring appeal to the Baptists of Canada, on behalf of his loved mission, which, if denied, the mission seemed, humanly speaking, to be doomed.

This proposal for

AN INDEPENDENT WORK

came sooner than we thought. Still the people at home and the missionaries abroad, saw eye to eye, in this matter of *this* being the charge the God of missions had for *us*. With solemn joy, and earnest prayer the charge was accepted. Dr. Clough's

return from America left Mr. McLaurin free to take up this new interest of our own. So in response to a cablegram from home, we set out in March, 1874, parting with deep regret from the dear Christians in Ongole, yet, so evidently led by God Himself, that we could not but have courage and be hopeful. We had met one European who knew Cocanada. He called it "an awfully wicked place." So much so, indeed, that he even doubted the wisdom of attempting to establish and develop a Christian work in such an atmosphere. On passing through Madras, however, we had a word of cheer from Rev. Mr. Fenn, honored secretary of the Church Missionary Society. He said: "I'm glad you are going. It is an important point, and has too long been neglected. We have wanted a man for that place, but could not spare one. May the Lord give you a sure footing in Cocanada."

A coasting steamer took us from Madras to Cocanada in about 40 hours; and here, Thomas Gabriel's face was the only one in that great city we had ever seen. Now Gabriel had a weakness. It was the extravagant use of money. So much we had learned from what he himself had told us of his life and work. Having been abundantly charged against this in securing a house for us, he had rented a native house, and that right in the crowded, noisy, vile-smelling bazaar. Something of a joke, perhaps. He'd usher in the new missionary on a plane of economy, that would suit even *his* ideas! After one night, *not* of sleep, in this place, Mr. Bowden, a Plymouth Brother, sought us out and took us to his own home. He then assisted in finding a suitable house. On looking into the work in Cocanada,

WHAT DID WE FIND ?

A dozen Christians all eating out of Gabriel's hand. The body of the members (about fifty) living seventy miles away, on what is now the Akidu field. Four ignorant and unsteady helpers and Rs.

2000 debt, representing money borrowed for the maintenance of the mission. It had been our hope to organize, open a school in Cocanada, and begin work among the villages at once. Through a mistake at home, we were left for months without funds. So the situation, bad at first, soon became very much worse. We had no means with which to do anything in the way of aggressive work. The Christians grew distrustful, and the heathen made an open mock of the Padre who had come to do so much for the people, but who, instead, had to go to them for means to secure food and shelter for his family. Were it worth while, we might tell of other ways in which we were kept from feeling over much at ease in our new quarters. However, the air grew clearer after a while; the mission began to take root among the people and the field to respond to the touch of the missionary, when suddenly, our friend and brother

GABRIEL WAS TAKEN TO HIS REWARD.

He died sublimely, as so many Telugu Christians have done, before and since; his latest word and smile testifying to the preciousness of the Lord Jesus. And now arose new difficulty. Gabriel had been without any kind of business capacity, and when the state of his affairs became known, his entanglements assumed a magnitude undreamed of before. Papers showing indebtedness to the amount of Rs. 2000 were in hand, but thousands more, justly or unjustly, were claimed. An impression was abroad that the *missionary* had become responsible for all Gabriel's liabilities, so now the angry, suspicious creditors swarmed around him; angry, because they could get but a part of what they claimed; suspicious, because members of Mr Gabriel's family, unworthy of the name, diligently circulated the story that, from the far country, plenty of money for all had come, but the missionary was keeping the bulk of it for himself.

Time and patience to the rescue once more, and

there was a chance to turn to our proper work again, to gather up the things that remained, and to go on as best we could ; although, by Gabriel's death, we had lost, as it were, a right arm. Before we had been able to enter fully upon Telugu work, a Sunday preaching service, a Sunday School, and a week-day prayer meeting in English had been begun in our parlor. Till to-day, these meetings have never for a week been discontinued. In the missionary's absence, first, Deacon Rouchett, and later, others, who from the Eurasians have been added to us, have efficiently conducted the same. The outcome of this work, part of it rather, is an English speaking Baptist church of fifty members, over which Mr. Laflamme now presides, and also a day and boarding school under Miss Folsom's care.

A NORMAL SCHOOL FOR CHRISTIAN TELUGU YOUTHS,

and soon after a boarding school for girls, with day departments attached, were opened. Not many months after Gabriel's death, Josiah Burder, who had first heard of salvation through Jesus, while a pupil in a school conducted by Mrs. Day, wife of the founder of the American Baptist Mission among the Telugus, came to us from the north, and nobly filled in our affections and in the work, the place left vacant by Gabriel's death. But all this time there was no Mission House in Cocanada. We had come in March, 1874, and the end of 1875 found us still in rented premises. In one of three possible ways, land might be secured. The municipality contemplated, some time, removing a Pariah *Petta*, which lay in a low, uncared-for part of the town. If we waited indefinitely we might have that for a consideration. Again, a land-holder offered land, but at a rate which we considered useless to refer to the Board. Government land lying outside the town might be secured ; this a bit of unbroken, undrained soil, a full mile from good water, further from the bazaar, and further still from our schools. Prospects were gloomy, when

RAJA RAMA RAO,

on solicitation. promised to give a piece of land which would in every way be suitable. After repeated interviews, arrangements were perfected; the land staked out and a jubilant letter written to the Board, telling the good news. This letter, however, was laid on the table till the deed was actually in hand. Instead of the deed, came a document from his majesty, begging to be allowed to withdraw his offer. The land joined the Brahman street. The Brahmans, enraged at the idea of the missionary and his "Paria dogs" being their neighbors, came to the Raja, declaring they would dismantle their houses and leave the street in a body, if he carried out his intention. He "feared their curse," he said, so, with many apologies and promises of help in the future, he cancelled the gift. At sea again! But the Lord had better things in store for us than we dreamed of. Mr. McLaurin found out, during a casual conversation with a rich native in a neighboring town, that a very desirable property in Cocanada was for sale. The property consisted of about twelve acres of land, a good large house, roads, wells, gardens and out-buildings. Good Deacon Rouchett was made negotiator, as, if known for what purpose wanted, we might be again thwarted. The owner seldom left his town, and Mr. Rouchett entered at once upon the purchase of the property; Rs. 9000 in all was asked. The man was ready any hour to take the advance sum that would bind the bargain. No time was lost in putting it in hand and

THE PLACE WAS SECURED.

Thereupon, as the news got abroad, no small stir arose. This time the English people were interested. This property was one of the finest in the city. It had been rented for Rs.90 (then worth \$40) a month, and more than one rich official coveted the ownership. They never dreamed, they

said, of its being in the market. More than one lamented that they had not known such to be the fact, while one individual went so far as to interview the owner with a view to breaking the bargain.

It was too late for anything of that kind, however, and on the 9th February, 1876, removal was made from the small, inconvenient rented place to the beautiful and commodious Mission House. Very delightful the exchange proved to be, and, best of all, it seemed so much like a gift from the dear Master Himself, that our hearts could not but rise in gratitude to Him. Three days after we took possession the Curries came, and there was ample room for all. From that time till the present, the Mission House has almost constantly accommodated either two families, or one and a single lady. Under its roof, our Brethren Timpany and Currie "Fell on sleep." At present it is occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Davis and Mr. Laflanme. Not long after we entered, an English architect examined the house, and estimated the cost of that alone to be not less than Rs. 15,000.

Our helpers and Normal School boys were amply accommodated in the out-buildings. There was no place for the boarding girls to live, or for schools, and so they continued in rented quarters under Mrs. Chapman's immediate care. Since that, there have been erected, in our Compound, a large chapel, school-house, girls' quarters, with matron's house, a Rest House for the use of missionaries coming in from the out-stations for medical treatment, or for other purposes, and the Zenana Home in which Miss Hatch now lives.

IT WAS DURING 1875

we welcomed to our side of the bay Messrs. Boggs, Churchill, Sanford and Armstrong, of the Maritime Provinces, and their families, sent out to the Karens of Siam. They found, after careful investigation, that the number of Karens was very small, and

those who were there were continually emigrating to British Burma. While in doubt as to where duty pointed, the claims of our wide and needy field were laid before them, and, with the approval of the Home Board, they joined us that year. After a long tour of exploration to the north, Mr. Sanford settled at Bimlipatam, a seaport 150 miles north of Cocanada. Mr. Churchill selected Bobbili, 60 miles further north-west, and the Armstrongs went to Kimediy, still further north. This place proving very feverish, they returned south to Chicacole, where they finally settled. Mr. and Mrs. Boggs had been compelled to return home for a time, as Mr. Boggs' health entirely failed. In January, 1877, the

CANADIAN BAPTIST TELUGU CONFERENCE

was formed. The object of this Association is to deliberate upon matters relative to the interests of the Mission, and upon any questions affecting the extension of Christ's Kingdom throughout India. The Conference meets annually in Cocanada and Bimlipatam alternately. Papers, on methods of work, etc., are prepared by appointment, read and discussed by the members present. It is the *one* occasion in the year, when all the members of the whole Canadian Mission are expected to meet together. Delightful seasons of social and religious enjoyment they have proved to be.

IN 1878, MR. CURRIE,

having secured an excellent use of the language, opened up our second station—Tuni. At that time Tuni was black as midnight, morally, and dead as the dry bones of the valley of vision, spiritually. In Tuni also there was long waiting, and repeated effort, before land was secured. Here, also, a Raja promised but failed to perform. After much going to and fro, and changing of conditions to meet the ever-changing mind of this Raja, the deed was signed, and the home of the Curries was fixed.

They took with them two or three helpers from Cocanada and their work began. Quietly, patiently and persistently Mr. Currie toiled on. Nor did the increase fail to appear. Especially were they successful in raising up and training workers. "Remembering that the beginning dates back only ten years, we may well wonder at the present staff of sixteen preachers, teachers and Bible women."* Since Mr. Currie's death the Mission House proper has been completed, the old residence serving now as chapel school-house.

Greatly to the joy of the little flock at Tuni, Mr. and Mrs. Garside have gone to live among them. The place is very lonely—forty miles from English faces or comforts. Yet it is constant contact with the shameless sin, the degradation, the ignorance and the deep poverty of the people around them that is most likely to depress the spirits of the missionary. Yet there is no more promising field in the mission than Tuni, and it is in their work that missionaries find their compensations—and these are neither few nor small.

Immediately after the Curries left Cocanada, where they had been such a blessing in doing a *temperance*, as well as a gospel work among the Eurasians, we had the

JOY OF WELCOMING THE CRAIGS.

Mr. Craig took up the English work along with language-study. In 1881, being *well* equipped in the language (and this is, while vital to a missionary's usefulness, unhappily more of a distinction than most people suppose), he opened the important station of Akidu. This is 75 miles south-west of Cocanada, and twenty from the nearest European neighbor. There were already 300 members on this field, a remarkably intelligent, self-reliant body. On his very arrival in Akidu, Mr. Craig was bereaved by the death of his wife. During

* See Canadian Baptist Mission Report for 1887-88.

the years that followed, his home was less than a home for him. Even more lonely than Tuni, that being on the highway between Madras and Calcutta, this, off by itself, where it is seldom visited by English or other officials. The view from the Mission House reveals an expanse of flat, saltish land, unrelieved by scarce a tree. India is famed for fine Government roads, but here there was not even a decent cart-track. Within five miles of the house, for years after it was built, a branch canal, which served as a substitute, passed near the door. Why select such a place for a home? Simply because there a station was most needed. Christians were there needing constantly among them the example of a devoted and energetic life. Heathen villages by the score lay close around, waiting for the light. As a charge, Akidu is the choice station on the field. It has to-day over 1,400 Christians, seven churches, several ordained pastors, and the noblest band of workers in the whole mission. Their days crowded with work for this great flock, and hundreds of villages on this field, waiting to hear of Jesus, the Mighty to save, our friends in Akidu find little time and less inclination to lament their loneliness. In the Compound, beside the residence and the chapel, there is the Memorial House for a girls' school. This is a fine large building, erected by Mr. Craig and relatives in loving remembrance of the gentle spirit which passed away while yet she had but touched her life work.

One church on this field, Gunanapuli, deserves special mention. It was the nucleus of all our work. The mother of the whole mission. Under the wise leadership of their pastor, K. Peter, they are doing a noble work. There are over 500 members in the church, and it is a rule among some of them to give a tenth of their income to the Lord. They keep up fine schools, selecting and paying their own teachers, in several surrounding villages. This church proves the possibilities of religious life of this people.

IN OCT., 1882, THE SEMINARY WAS OPENED

in Samulcotta. This is a theological training school, in which teachers and preachers are prepared for their work. Only members of churches are admitted, and only such retained for a full course as give evidence of a call to the ministry, or special usefulness in Christian work. During the five years of the school's existence, six young men have been graduated, not one of whom has failed to justify the hopes entertained of his usefulness. Mr. Stillwell is now Principal of this institution, and, at the present time, over 60 students are under his care. In this same year

MISS FRITH CAME TO US,

in response to a call for help for the caste women. No need of telling how wonderfully doors and hearts were opened for her entrance, or how many of these dark-minded Zenana women are longing for her return.

IN 1883 MISS FOLSOM,

one of God's choicest gifts to the mission, came to take charge of the English school, an outgrowth of the work for the Eurasians, not in any *financial* way connected with the mission. She is truly a co-worker with us. Years after she left Canada, at a meeting of the Eastern Society in Ottawa, two lady visitors, both of whom are intimately associated with Christian work in other denominations, referred to Miss Folsom as the one who had first awakened in their minds an interest in Foreign Missions.

IN THE FALL OF 1886, MISS HATCH

joined us, in response to a special and joint appeal from all the missionaries. She was invited to take charge of the Bible department in the Seminary. On account of Miss Frith's absence, she has been, so far, confined to Cocanada. When released by

the arrival of the outgoing young ladies, it is expected she will revert to her own important appointment in the Seminary.

During 1886,

A FINE PROPERTY WAS PURCHASED

for the English Boarding and Day School under Miss Folsom. This is known as the "Timpany Memorial School." The cost of this school is provided for by local subscriptions. Although no mission money has gone into any branch of this English work, the missionaries have given it time and care, and private means as could be spared from Telugu interests, feeling it a privilege to help along a work so much needed and so rich in gratifying results.

OF OTHER CHANGES

in the Mission it is not necessary to speak. The general advance in piety, in intelligence, in Christian manliness and conduct is most gratifying. The Godavery Association, having the same objects in view, and carried on in the same manner as Associations at home, has been in existence for some years. Another cheering sign of progress is the formation of a Home Missionary Society during the past year.

The use of intoxicating drinks excludes from church fellowship, and the use of tobacco from the ranks of the ordained ministry.

LET US NOW SUM UP

the tangible results of fourteen years of growth. There are thirteen missionaries, including those about reaching the field; four stations with school houses, and mission property worth \$20,000; thirteen churches, 42 preachers (seven ordained), 39 teachers, eleven Bible women, four colporteurs, a Seminary with 60 students in attendance, and over 2,200 church members, besides the many dear ones

of whom it may be truly said, "They finished their course with joy. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

AND WE HAVE OUR GRAVES.

Yes, "God buries his workmen, but carries on His work." This, however, is only a beginning. For the *hundreds* who have heard, and now live, thousands still await the coming of God's messengers of peace. For the thousands rejoicing in the light, millions are yet in deadly darkness, and it is to the Baptists of Canada alone *these* millions make their mute appeal.

M. B. McLaurin.



